

Re Item V.

- 1 The following documents are referred to in this communication:

D1 : EP 0 104 039 A (SMITH AND NEPHEW ASSOCIATED COMPANIES P.L.C)
28 March 1984 (1984-03-28)

D2 : US 3 905 372 A (DENKINGER ET AL) 16 September 1975 (1975-09-16)

2 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 1

- 2.1 The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 1 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT.

Document D1 discloses (**Page 28 line 21- page 29 line 23; page 20 line 14 - page 21 line 4; drawings 3- 3B**):

A sanitary product for insertion into a human vagina, the product comprising an internally worn absorbent plug (**11**) and an externally worn absorbent pad (**6**) joined to one another by a sheath (**2**) that opens through the pad such that a wearer's finger can be received in the sheath to assist insertion.

3 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 25

- 3.1 The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 25 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT.

The method of manufacturing the sanitary product is implicitly disclosed in D1.

4 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-24, 26

Dependent claims 2-24, 26 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step (Article 33(2) and (3) PCT).

Re Item VIII.

The application does not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT, because claims 1-3,6-12,14,16-18,24,25 are not clear.

1. To many independent claims

Although claims 1,16,24,26 have been drafted as separate independent claims, they appear to relate effectively to the same subject-matter and to differ from each other only with regard to the definition of the subject-matter for which protection is sought or in respect of the terminology used for the features of that subject-matter. The aforementioned claims therefore lack conciseness and as such do not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT.

Claims 16, 24, 26 are considered as depending on claim 1.

2. Inconsistency

According to line 5 of page 5 of the description the term sheath might be referred to as cover, sleeve or neck.

Claims 1-15, 24, 25 use the term sheath and claims 16-18 use the term neck.